THE DUTCH CHURCH, AUSTIN FRIARS.

This church stands upon the spot where in 1252 Humfrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, built at his proper cost a church and conventual buildings for the reception of a superior and brethren of the order of Augustine friars. Hence it obtained its title of "The Augustine Priory of London;" and the site and vicinity of that religious establishment still are, and probably will continue to be, known by the appellation of Austin Friars. The history of the friarial institution in question is in complexion and events similar to those of the more celebrated abbeys; it had during the interim between the dissolution and surrender (30th Henry VIII.) greatly extended its possessions, and had become to the citizens an object of especial veneration and regard, its prior having the rank and privileges of an alderman, and joining as such on public occasions and processions, with the single distinction of his civic costume being made in fashion to assimilate with his ecclesiastical vestments. After the surrender, the site, buildings, and lands, or the greater part of them (for we shall see presently there must have been some reservation with respect to a portion of the church itself), were granted to William Powlett, or Paulet, afterwards created Earl of Wilts and Marquis of Winchester. Great and Little Winchester-streets, in the city of London, and several others in that immediate neighbourhood, are built on the ground which formed the gardens of the first Lord Winchester, originally those of the Augustine Priory.

From the early date referred to there has been a church upon this spot, for although Paulet converted the greater part of the building to domestic uses, there was still a portion of the older church reserved for public worship. The first Lord Winchester appears to have proceeded cautiously, if not reluctantly, in the work of demolition; but his son and successor, with less compunction, sold for 100*l.* the sacred pavement, and nearly the whole of the fine old monuments which covered the host of illustrious dead with whose remains the church and cloisters were crowded; and he further, for its price, stripped the roofs of their leaden covering, replacing it by tiles. The citizens feeling themselves outraged by this procedure, turned their attention to the preservation of the church, and in a petition, still extant, dated August 4th, 1600, signed by the mayor and principal civic residents, they solicited the Marquis of Winchester to atone in some measure by subscribing 50*l.* or 60*l.* towards repairing the remaining fabric, but this was refused. Hence, it seems the forbearance of Lord Winchester from altogether razing the fabric was not voluntary, the Crown having, it would also appear, a reserved power over part of the ancient church; and this was eventually exercised by granting permission to the Dutch congregation in London to use it for their meeting and "preaching place." During the short reign of Edward VI., the grant was confirmed by letters patent, in which it is denominated a free gift, for the use of those of the Dutch or German nations who had fled hither on account of religion. This immunity has always been respected and acknowledged by the succeeding monarchs, and in the hands of the descendants of this respectable body, now much augmented by widely-extended and more stable commercial relations, it still remains.

It is an old custom for the Dutch congregation to present an address to each Bishop of London and Lord Mayor, upon their installation; and upon such occasions the party addressed receives the more substantial compliment of a piece of plate.

We shall in another number recur to this interesting subject, and shall illustrate it, as well by engravings as by an architectural description of the church in its existing state.

ON BREAST-SUMMERS IN BUILDING:

How Abuse in the Frequent Use of them has Increased in Modern Times: Of their Inconvenience: Some Thoughts and Suggestions for Preventing the Evils Resulting from the Use of them; and Some Further Suggestions for Superseding on many Occasions the Use of them altogether.

Viewed as a principle of construction, the use of breast-summers is wholly inadmissible: for the superincumbent weight upheld by them acts upon them by direct cross-strain, a test to which no materials whatever should be put in a building formed upon a correct principle of construction.

It has been stated that from the shrinkage of the wood, the brickwork over a breast-summer usually cracks, falls, and becomes disjointed. But it must be admitted, that sometimes, though this be the case, a timber breast-summer is not itself defective further than happens from its shrinkage and yielding; for its fibrous nature imparts to it such toughness, that it will rarely break: but the inconvenience of leading to the disruption and distortion of the superincumbent wall is sufficient cause for its rejection.

At the present day it is in vain to argue with a trader, that his house of business would appear more respectable and elegant were it made with a due regard both to real strength and to strength of appearance: seeking only to expose his goods, and to undersell his neighbour, he little cares whether the fabric of his house be injured, or whether it be made in itself mean, provided his darling object be attained.

To such an extent is the description of house-breaking caused by cutting away the bottoms of houses for the imaginary necessary

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